

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LEGISLATOR STEVE STERN URGES RESIDENTS TO REPLACE BATTERIES IN SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS**

*Change the Time, Change the Batteries*

**HUNTINGTON, NY** – Legislator Steve Stern (D-Huntington, 16<sup>th</sup> L.D), is joining with our local Fire Departments to urge residents to change the batteries in their smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. We will turn the clocks back to Standard Time on November 3<sup>rd</sup> which is a perfect opportunity to replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, which are the first line of defense from fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. Every year, house fires kill more than 4,000 people nationwide and injure more than 30,000. Property damage from fire exceeds \$11 billion annually. Most fires happen at night when people are sleeping. Studies have shown that 75% of these fatalities and injuries would have been prevented by proper installation of smoke detectors.

The National Fire Protection Agency recommends that every home have a smoke detector outside of each sleeping area and inside bedrooms if the doors are closed at night. Smoke detectors should also be placed in the basement, near the kitchen and other living areas.

It is also important to have carbon monoxide detectors and to replace the batteries twice a year to ensure proper operation. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas, produced when fossil fuels are burned. It is a silent killer, taking the lives of hundreds of people each year and sickening thousands more. The Centers for Disease Control recommends the following:

- **Do** have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- **Do** install a battery-operated or battery back-up CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. If the detector sounds leave your home immediately and call 911.
- **Do** seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseous.
- **Don't** use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window.
- **Don't** run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- **Don't** burn anything in a stove or fireplace that isn't vented.
- **Don't** heat your house with a gas oven.

“Taking a few minutes to change the batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors can literally mean the difference between life and death,” Legislator Stern said. “As we ‘Fall Back,’ please replace the batteries in your smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors. If you do not have smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors, please install them to protect yourself and your loved ones.”